Main reasons for the losses of Indian Airlines are

(1) Grounding of A-320 aircraft for a long period during 1990-91,

(2) Exchange rate fluctuations;

(3) Increase in the price of Aviation Turbine Fuel;

(4) Agitation/Strike by pilots from October, 1992 to January, 1993.

Vayudoot has been operating mainly on uneconomic routes and aircraft and hence it has been incurring losses from year to year.

(b) While Indian Airlines has no problems of spares at present, Vayudoot continues to have problems on this account due to paucity of funds. Attempts are being made to overcome this.

(c) There is a wide variation in the nature of activities and contracting practices followed by different airlines in the world, it is, therefore, difficult to present any meaningful comparison.

(d) All routes operated by Air India have shown cash profit. So far as Indian Airlines is concerned, services in the north-Eastern sector Jammu and Kashmir sector, Andaman-Nicobar sector are showing recurrent loss. Operations of Vaydoot are by and large uneconomical.

Merger of IA, AI and Vayudoot

1389. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating merger of Indian Airlines, Air India and Vayudoot; and

(b) if so, when the merger is likely to take place?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) It has been decided to merge Vayudoot with Indian Airlines but not to merge of all the three at present.

Merger of NAA and IAAI

1390. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is proposing to merge the National Airports Authority with International Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this merger; and

(c) when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The reasons are as follows:—

(i) better coordination by a single authority.

(ii) optimal utilisation of resources to promote integrated development of airports infrastructure in all aspects including Air Traffic Control and Communication Systems.

(iii) generation of larger resources through integrated management by a single authority.

(iv) Better utilisation of expertise in airport design, planning and pooling of management resources for improved efficiency.

(c) A Bill to bring about the merger is expected to be presented to the Parliament in the current Session.

Non-NRI Tourists

1391. SHRI ANANTRAM JAISWAL: SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what was the number of non-NRI tourists who visited India during 1990-91 and 1991-92 from the countries other than SAARC region; and

(b) what is the estimated foreign exchange brought into India by them during their visit?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) The number of tourists who visited India during 1990-91 and 1991-92 from countries other than SAARC countries were 1,40,098 and 1,218,103 respectively. By definition, tourists do not include non-resident Indians.

(b) The estimates of foreign exchange earnings from tourism are not worked out nationality-wise. However, the total earnings from tourists other than the nationals of Pakistan and Bangladesh during 1990-91 and 1991-92 were estimated to be Rs. 2363 crores and Rs. 3185 crores respectively.

Renaming of Hyderabad Airport

1392 SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status regarding naming of Hyderabad Airport after late Shri Rajiv Gandhi; and

(b) what are the reasons for delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Hyderabad airport is being brought to international standards. Its declaration as international airport and renaming as Rajiv Gandhi International airport will follow thereafter.

Tourist Potential of Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh

1393. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the tourist potential of ARAKU Valley in Andhra Pradesh near Visakhapatnam;

(b) what steps are proposed to be undertaken by Government to survey the ARAKU Valley; and

(c) whether any study or survey has been conducted of this scenic and historic area in Andhra Pradesh near Visakhapatnam?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has conducted a survey of tourist places in Andhra Pradesh including ARAKU Valley in the year 1990.

Import of old aircraft

1394. SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some private airlines have imported old aircraft without mandatory import licence; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Under Public Notice No. 10-ITC(PN)/92-97 dated 30-4-1992, Air Taxi operators can import aircraft, without obtaining an import licence.

Passengers carried by IA and Air Taxi operators

1395. SHRI M. A. BABY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of passengers carried by IA during the last three years as against the average number of passenger carried by IA during the last three months:

(b) what are the steps being taken or contemplated by the Ministry, for the improvement of customers serious in IA with the details thereof, in view of the fact that many private sector airlines are providing staff competition for the IA; and